

Some of them I have already stated. But there were others equally fallacious and more fantastic.

Admiralty's The expert advisers of the Admiralty

low estimate at *its* *me* *were* labouring under a set

of *pers* *of* surprising delusions. The foremost of

seamanship these was that the steamers of the

mercantile marine could not be relied upon to

"keep station." In a convoy they would therefore

bump into the escort or each other to the common

danger of all, or perhaps in order to avoid this mutual

ramming they might disperse, lose sight of each

other and of their escort, and in wandering about to

recover touch, would become easy victims for the

prowling sword-fish of the Germany Navy. The

seamanship of the experienced mariners who steered

the tramp through all weathers across the wild and

foggy seas that surround and lead to these islands

was completely under-estimated. No voyager who

has witnessed a heavily-laden tramp successfully

battling through the breakers in a Bay of Biscay

storm would doubt the capacity of the sailors who

manned these buffeted and swamped vessels to handle

them with complete efficiency, whatever the demand.

It surprised me to find that the *Captains* of the liners

who were first consulted by the Admiralty shared Sir

John Jellicoe's doubts as to the capacity of the small

tramp to keep station. It is simply the arrogant sense

of superiority which induces the uniformed
chauffeur
of a Rolls Royce to look down on the driver
of what is
contemptuously stigmatised as a "tin
Lizzie."

The Admirals were thus sure, in
defiance of all
historic evidence, that vessels travelling
together in
a convoy would be exposed to greater
peril than
if they travelled singly. They greatly over-
estimated
the number of men-of-war that would
be needed